



What You Will Learn...

Main Ideas

1. Reconstruction governments helped reform the South.
2. The Ku Klux Klan was organized as African Americans moved into positions of power.
3. As Reconstruction ended, the rights of African Americans were restricted.
4. Southern business leaders relied on industry to rebuild the South.

The Big Idea

As Reconstruction ended, African Americans faced new hurdles and the South attempted to rebuild.

Key Terms and People

Hiram Revels, *p. 565*
 Ku Klux Klan, *p. 566*
 Compromise of 1877, *p. 568*
 poll tax, *p. 568*
 segregation, *p. 569*
 Jim Crow laws, *p. 569*
Plessy v. Ferguson, *p. 569*
 sharecropping, *p. 570*



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TAKING NOTES

Use the graphic organizer online to take notes on the South's efforts to rebuild and the effects of those efforts on African Americans.

Reconstruction in the South

If YOU were there...

You live on a farm in the South in the 1870s. Times are hard because you do not own your farm. Instead, you and your family work in a landowner's cotton fields. You never seem to earn enough to buy land of your own. Some of your neighbors have decided to give up farming and move to the city. Others are going to work in the textile mills. But you have always been a farmer.

Will you decide to change your way of life?

BUILDING BACKGROUND Reconstruction affected politics and economics in the South. Republican and Democratic politicians fought over policies and programs. New state governments began reforms, but later leaders ended many of them. Some parts of the southern economy improved. However, many farmers, like the family above, went through hard times.

Reconstruction Governments

After Grant became president in 1869, the Republicans seemed stronger than ever. They controlled most southern governments, partly because of the support of African American voters. However, Republican officeholders were unpopular with white southerners.

Carpetbaggers and Scalawags

Some of these office-holders were northern-born Republicans who had moved South after the war. Many white southerners called them carpetbaggers. Supposedly, they had rushed South carrying all their possessions in bags made from carpeting. Many southerners resented these northerners, accusing them—often unfairly—of trying to profit from Reconstruction. Because the South needed both physical and economic rebuilding, there were many business opportunities. Northerners who had not been devastated by the war had more money to invest and could therefore profit from these opportunities.

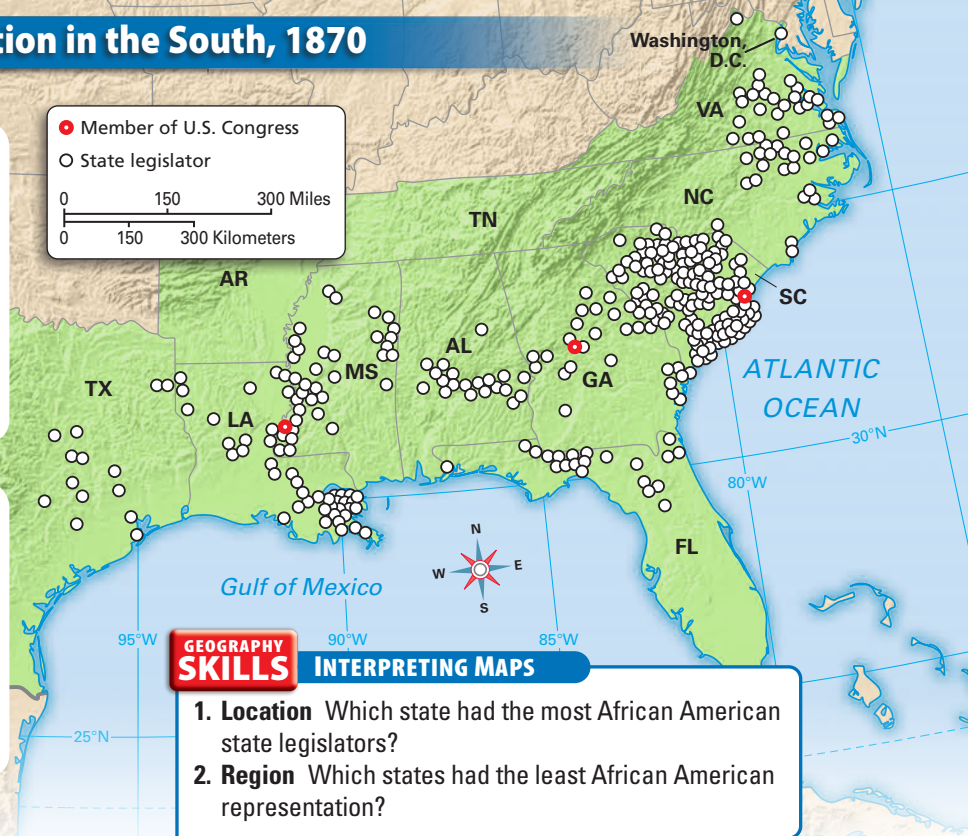
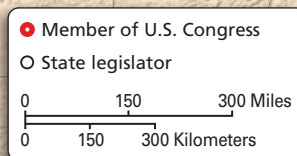
African American Representation in the South, 1870



Hiram Revels was the son of former slaves and helped organize African American regiments in the Civil War. Revels was selected to fill the U.S. Senate seat formerly held by Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy.



Blanche K. Bruce escaped from slavery and began a school for African Americans before the Civil War. Bruce was the first African American elected to a full six-year term in the U.S. Senate.



Southern Democrats cared even less for white southern Republicans. They referred to them as scalawags, or greedy rascals. Democrats believed that these southerners had betrayed the South by voting for the Republican Party. Many southern Republicans were small farmers who had supported the Union during the war. Others, like Mississippi governor James Alcorn, were former members of the Whig Party. They preferred to become Republicans rather than join the Democrats.

African American Leaders

African Americans were the largest group of southern Republican voters. During Reconstruction, more than 600 African Americans won election to state legislatures. Some 16 of these politicians were elected to Congress. Other African Americans held local offices in counties throughout the South.

African American politicians came from many backgrounds. **Hiram Revels** was born free in North Carolina and went to college in Illinois. He became a Methodist minister and served as a chaplain in the Union army. In

1870, after many debates at the national and state levels about his eligibility and citizenship, Revels became the first African American in the U.S. Senate. He took over the seat previously held by Confederate president Jefferson Davis. Revels held a moderate view of the readmission of former Confederates. Education and employment for African Americans were two of his top priorities. Revels helped display the ability of African Americans to take part in governing.

Unlike Revels, Blanche K. Bruce grew up in slavery in Virginia. Bruce became an important Republican in Mississippi and served one term as a U.S. senator. He worked to integrate the military while in office. After completing his term, he became the first president of Alcorn University.

Reconstructed State Governments

The new Reconstruction state governments made policies that increased civil and voting rights for African Americans. They passed laws that ensured African Americans were allowed to vote in every community. In

FOCUS ON READING

What might you predict would change with African Americans serving as elected representatives?

many places, however, there was still resistance by whites. Because former Confederates could usually not vote, they struggled to maintain political influence.

Reconstruction governments provided money for many new programs and organizations in the South. Lawmakers hoped that these organizations would help southerners adjust to the new economic and social structure. They helped to establish some of the first state-funded public school systems in the South. They also built new hospitals, prisons, and orphanages and passed laws prohibiting discrimination against African Americans. Many of these programs improved the lives of African Americans and whites in the South, and gave people economic opportunities and access to political offices. However, racism and the dramatically different culture of groups led to conflicting expectations, and sometimes tensions led to violence.

Southern states under Republican control spent large amounts of money. They aided the construction of railroads, bridges, and public buildings. These improvements were intended to help the southern

economy recover from the war. To get the money for these projects, the Reconstruction governments raised taxes and issued bonds. Although some people protested the increased taxes, the improved infrastructure helped the South to increase its trade and production capabilities.

READING CHECK **Summarizing** What reforms did Reconstruction state governments carry out?

Ku Klux Klan

As more African Americans took office, resistance to Reconstruction increased among white southerners. Democrats claimed that the Reconstruction governments were corrupt, illegal, and unjust. They also disliked having federal soldiers stationed in their states. Many white southerners disapproved of African American officeholders. One Democrat noted, “A white man’s government’ [is] the most popular rallying cry we have.” In 1866 a group of white southerners in Tennessee created the **Ku Klux Klan**. This secret society opposed civil rights, particularly suffrage, for African Americans. The Klan used

The Ku Klux Klan



Members of the Ku Klux Klan often attacked under cover of darkness to hide their identities. This klansman, shown on the left, even disguised his horse.

Why do you think Klan members disguised themselves?

violence and terror against African Americans. The group's membership grew rapidly as it spread throughout the South. Klan members wore robes and disguises to hide their identities. They attacked—and even murdered—African Americans, white Republican voters, and public officials, usually at night.

Local governments did little to stop the violence. Many officials feared the Klan or were sympathetic to its activities. In 1870 and 1871 the federal government took action. Congress passed laws that made it a federal crime to interfere with elections or to deny citizens equal protection under the law.

Within a few years, the Klan was no longer an organized threat. But groups of whites continued to assault African Americans and Republicans throughout the 1870s.

READING CHECK **Drawing Conclusions** Why did southerners join the Ku Klux Klan?

Reconstruction Ends

The violence of the Ku Klux Klan was not the only challenge to Reconstruction. Republicans slowly lost control of southern state governments to the Democratic Party. The General Amnesty Act of 1872 allowed former Confederates, except those who had held high ranks, to serve in public office. Many of these former Confederates, most of whom were Democrats, were soon elected to southern governments.

The Republican Party also began losing its power in the North. Although President Grant was re-elected in 1872, financial and political scandals in his administration upset voters. In his first term, a gold-buying scheme in which Grant's cousin took a leading role led to a brief crisis on the stock market called Black Friday. During his second term, his personal secretary was involved in the Whiskey Ring scandal, in which whiskey distillers and public officials worked together to steal liquor taxes from the federal government. Furthermore, people blamed Republican policies for the Panic of 1873.

Panic of 1873

This severe economic downturn began in September 1873 when Jay Cooke and Company, a major investor in railroads and the largest financier of the Union's Civil War effort, declared bankruptcy. The company had lied about the value of land along the side of the Northern Pacific Railroad that it owned and was trying to sell. When the truth leaked out, the company failed.

The failure of such an important business sent panic through the stock market, and investors began selling shares of stock more rapidly than people wanted to buy them. Companies had to buy their shares back from the investors. Soon, 89 of the nation's 364 railroads had failed as well. The failure of almost 18,000 other businesses followed within two years, leaving the nation in an economic crisis. By 1876 unemployment had risen to 14 percent, with an estimated 2 million people out of work. The high unemployment rate set off numerous strikes and protests around the nation, many involving railroad workers. In 1874 the Democrats gained control of the House of Representatives. Northerners were becoming less concerned about southern racism and more concerned about their financial well-being.

Election of 1876

Republicans could tell that northern support for Reconstruction was fading. Voters' attention was shifting to economic problems. In 1874 the Republican Party lost control of the House of Representatives to the Democrats. The Republicans in Congress managed to pass one last civil rights law. The Civil Rights Act of 1875 guaranteed African Americans equal rights in public places, such as theaters and public transportation. But as Americans became increasingly worried about economic problems and government corruption, the Republican Party began to abandon Reconstruction.



Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)

Background of the Case In 1892, Homer Plessy took a seat in the “whites only” car of a train in Louisiana. He was arrested, put on trial, and convicted of violating Louisiana’s segregation law. Plessy argued that the Louisiana law violated the Thirteenth Amendment and denied him the equal protection of the law

The Court’s Ruling

The Court ruled that the Louisiana “separate-but-equal” law was constitutional.

The Court’s Reasoning

The Court stated that the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments did not apply. The Court decided that the case had nothing to do with the abolition of slavery mentioned in the Thirteenth Amendment. The justices also ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment was not designed to eliminate social barriers to equality between the races, only political barriers.

Justice John Marshall Harlan disagreed with the Court’s ruling. In a dissenting opinion, he wrote that “in respect of civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law.”

Why It Matters

Plessy was important because it approved the idea of separate-but-equal facilities for people based on race. The doctrine of separate-but-equal led to segregation in trains, buses, schools, restaurants, and many other social institutions.

The separate-but-equal doctrine led to unequal treatment of minority groups for decades. It was finally struck down by another Supreme Court ruling, *Brown v. Board of Education*, in 1954.

ANALYSIS SKILL

ANALYZING INFORMATION

1. Why did the Court reject Plessy’s arguments?
2. Why was *Plessy v. Ferguson* an important Supreme Court case?

Republicans selected Ohio governor Rutherford B. Hayes as their 1876 presidential candidate. He believed in ending federal support of the Reconstruction governments. The Democrats nominated New York governor Samuel J. Tilden. During the election, Democrats in the South again used violence at the polls to keep Republican voters away.

The election between Hayes and Tilden was close. Tilden appeared to have won. Republicans challenged the electoral votes in Oregon and three southern states. A special commission of members of Congress and Supreme Court justices was appointed to settle the issue.

The commission narrowly decided to give all the disputed votes to Hayes. Hayes thus won the presidency by one electoral vote. In the **Compromise of 1877**, the Democrats agreed to accept Hayes’s victory. In return, they wanted all remaining federal troops removed from the South. They also asked for funding for internal improvements and the appointment of a southern Democrat to the president’s cabinet. Shortly after he took office in 1877, President Hayes removed the last of the federal troops from the South.

Redeemers

Gradually, Democrats regained control of state governments in the South. In each state, they moved quickly to get rid of the Reconstruction reforms.

Democrats who brought their party back to power in the South were called Redeemers. They came from a variety of backgrounds. For instance, U.S. senator John T. Morgan of Alabama was a former general in the Confederate army. Newspaper editor Henry Grady of Georgia was interested in promoting southern industry.

Redeemers wanted to reduce the size of state government and limit the rights of African Americans. They lowered state budgets and got rid of a variety of social programs. The Redeemers cut property taxes and cut public funding for schools. They also succeeded in limiting African Americans’ civil rights.

African Americans’ Rights Restricted

Redeemers set up the poll tax in an effort to deny the vote to African Americans. The **poll tax** was a special tax people had to pay before they could vote.

Some states also targeted African American voters by requiring them to pass a literacy test. A so-called grandfather clause written into law affected men whose fathers or grandfathers could vote before 1867. In those cases, a voter did not have to pay a poll tax or pass a literacy test. As a result, almost every white man could escape the voting restrictions.

Redeemer governments also introduced legal **segregation**, the forced separation of whites and African Americans in public places. **Jim Crow laws**—laws that enforced segregation—became common in southern states in the 1880s.

African Americans challenged Jim Crow laws in court. In 1883, however, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Civil Rights Act of 1875 was unconstitutional. The Court also ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment applied only to the actions of state governments. This ruling allowed private individuals and businesses to practice segregation.

Plessy v. Ferguson

In 1896 the U.S. Supreme Court returned to the issue of segregation. When Homer Plessy, an African American, refused to leave the whites-only Louisiana train car he was riding on, he was arrested and accused of breaking a state law requiring separate cars for blacks and whites. Plessy sued the railroad company and lost. His lawyers argued that the law violated his right to equal treatment under the Four-

teenth Amendment. He then appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Supreme Court ruled against Plessy in **Plessy v. Ferguson**. Segregation was allowed, said the Court, if “separate-but-equal” facilities were provided. Among the justices, only John Marshall Harlan disagreed with the Court’s decision. He explained his disagreement in a dissenting opinion:

“In the eye of the law, there is in the country no superior, dominant [controlling], ruling class of citizens ... Our constitution is color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens. In respect of civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law.”

—John Marshall Harlan, quoted in *Plessy v. Ferguson: A Brief History with Documents*, edited by Brook Thomas

Despite Harlan’s view, segregation became widespread across the country. African Americans were forced to use separate public schools, libraries, and parks. When they existed, these facilities were usually of poorer quality than those created for whites. In practice, these so-called separate-but-equal facilities were separate and unequal. Neither Congress nor the president would make significant actions to overturn the doctrine until the 1900s.

Farming in the South

Few African Americans in the South could afford to buy or even rent farms. Moving West also was costly. Many African Americans therefore remained on plantations. Others tried to make a living in the cities.

Hopes Raised and Denied

**QUICK
FACTS**

Slavery

- No rights
- Forced labor
- No freedom of movement without permission
- Family members sold away from one another
- No representation in government

Freedom

- Slavery banned
- Free to work for wages
- Could move and live anywhere
- Many families reunited
- Could serve in political office

Rights Denied

- Sharecropping system put in place
- Ability to vote and hold office restricted
- White leadership regained control of southern state governments

The New South



African Americans who stayed on plantations often became part of a system known as **sharecropping**, or sharing the crop. Landowners provided the land, tools, and supplies, and sharecroppers provided the labor. At harvest time, the sharecropper usually had to give most of the crop to the landowner. Whatever remained belonged to the sharecropper. Many sharecroppers hoped to save enough money from selling their share of the crops to one day be able to buy a farm. Unfortunately, only a few ever succeeded.

Instead, most sharecroppers lived in a cycle of debt. When they needed food, clothing, or supplies, most families had to buy goods on credit because they had little cash. When sharecroppers sold their crops, they hoped to be able to pay off these debts. However, bad weather, poor harvests, or low crop prices often made this dream impossible.

Sharecroppers usually grew cotton, one of the South's most important cash crops. When too many farmers planted cotton, however, the supply became excessive. As a result, the price per bale of cotton dropped. Many farmers understood the drawbacks of planting cotton. However, farmers felt

pressure from banks and others to keep raising cotton.

READING CHECK Finding Main Ideas How were African Americans' rights restricted?

Rebuilding Industry

The southern economy suffered through cycles of good and bad years as cotton prices went up and down. Some business leaders hoped industry would strengthen the southern economy and create a New South.

Southern Industry

Henry Grady, an Atlanta newspaper editor, was a leader of the New South movement. "The new South presents . . . a diversified [varied] industry that meets the complex needs of this complex age," he wrote. Grady and his supporters felt that with its cheap and abundant labor, the South could build factories and provide a workforce for them.

The most successful industrial development in the South involved textile production. Businesspeople built textile mills in many small towns to produce cotton fabric. Many



"The New South...is stirred with the breath of a new life."

—Henry Grady

Atlanta rebuilt quickly after the war, becoming a leading railroad and industrial center. Newspaper editor Henry Grady gave stirring speeches about the need for industry in the South. He became one of the best-known spokesmen of the "New South."

Why might Grady point to Atlanta as a model for economic change?

people from rural areas came to work in the mills, but African Americans were not allowed to work in most of them.

Southern Mill Life

Work in the cotton mills appealed to farm families who had trouble making ends meet. As one mill worker explained, "It was a necessity to move and get a job, rather than depend on the farm." Recruiters sent out by the mills promised good wages and steady work.

Entire families often worked in the same cotton mill. Mills employed large numbers of women and children. Many children started working at about the age of 12. Some children started working at an even earlier age. Women did most of the spinning and were valued workers. However, few women had the opportunity to advance within the company.

Many mill workers were proud of the skills they used, but they did not enjoy their work. One unhappy worker described it as "the same thing over and over again . . . The more you do, the more they want done." Workers often labored 12 hours a day, six days a week. Cotton dust and lint filled the air, causing asthma and an illness known as brown-lung

disease. Fast-moving machinery caused injuries and even deaths. Despite the long hours and dangerous working conditions, wages remained low. However, mill work did offer an alternative to farming.

READING CHECK **Finding Main Ideas** What did southern business leaders hope industry would do?

Reconstruction in the North

Although most federal Reconstruction policies were designed to reform the South, they affected groups in the North as well. There were many groups who worked to advance their own rights and interests during this time.

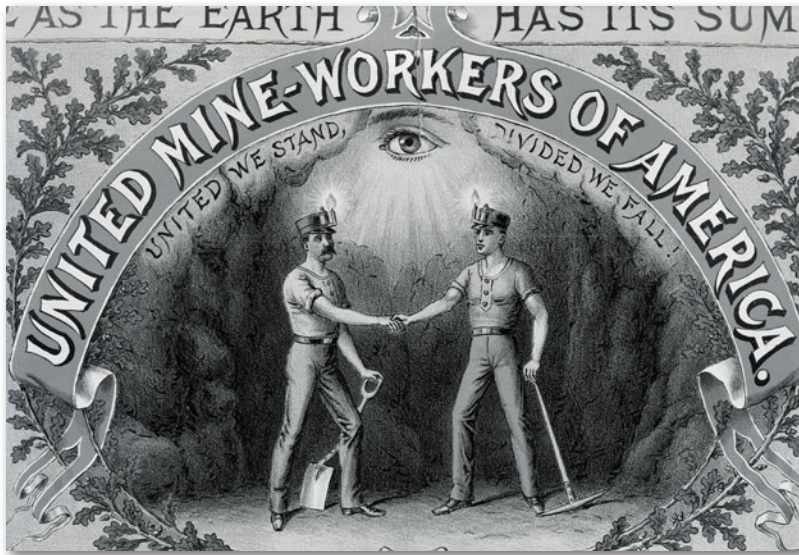
Women and Northern African Americans

The Radical Republicans passed many federal laws that required Southern states to allow African American men to vote. They based their cause on the ideal of equality found in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Women's suffragists began using these same arguments to support their own suffrage. Wyoming and Utah granted women the vote in 1869, but their motivations were not just to ensure equal rights for women. Wyoming leaders hoped to attract more women residents, while Utahans hoped to counteract the rising number of non-Mormon voters.

African Americans in the North faced less social discrimination than they did in the South but still faced racism and segregation. In response, some state governments passed laws that made segregation illegal. Some integrated their school systems. Still, most states upheld the principle of separate-but-equal facilities.

A Changing Economy

During the war and Reconstruction, the economy of the North and the West grew rapidly. Manufacturing, commerce, and rail transportation generated tremendous



As the economy grew, unions such as the United Mine Workers of America grew in membership and influence.

fortunes. Large companies grew by buying smaller companies, and railroads made huge profits transporting goods and people. Tax revenue increased as well, and governments were able to provide more services and make more investments.

Between 1865 and 1873, almost 3 million immigrants arrived in the United States. They provided a new pool of labor for the growing industrial economy. The number

of labor unions increased, and they began to push for policies that protected workers. Reformers pressed for eight-hour-workday and fair-pay laws. In addition, the increase in commercial and trading businesses led to a shift in the make up of the working class. It now included a majority of professionals and white-collar workers.

Eventually the focus of the Republican Party began to move away from civil rights for African Americans and toward reducing government corruption. The acceptance of the Compromise of 1877 signaled the end of the Republican focus on reforming racial politics in the South.

READING CHECK Comparing and Contrasting

How was Reconstruction in the North similar to and different from Reconstruction in the South?

SUMMARY AND PREVIEW In this section you learned about the end of Reconstruction. In the next chapter you will learn about America's continued westward expansion.

Section 3 Assessment



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ONLINE QUIZ

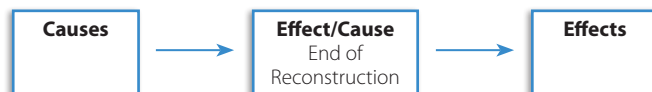
Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

1. **a. Identify** Who were some prominent African American leaders during Reconstruction? Why was the election of Hiram Rhodes Revels significant?
- b. Evaluate** What do you think was the most important change made by Reconstruction state governments? Explain your answer.
2. **a. Recall** For what reasons did some local governments not stop the Ku Klux Klan?
- b. Draw Conclusions** How did the Ku Klux Klan's use of terror interfere with elections in the South?
3. **a. Summarize** What was the **Compromise of 1877**?
- b. Evaluate** How did *Plessy v. Ferguson* affect life in the United States?
- c. Explain** What was the relationship between **Jim Crow laws** and **segregation**?
4. **a. Identify** Who was Henry Grady, and why was he important?
- b. Predict** What are some possible results of the rise of the "New South"? How did life change with the increase in industry?

- c. Identify** How were women affected by Reconstruction? What political effects did women have?

Critical Thinking

5. **Identifying Causes and Effects** Review your notes on Reconstruction governments. Then copy the graphic organizer below and use it to show why Reconstruction ended, as well as the results of its end.



FOCUS ON WRITING

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6. **Relating Historical Change to Individual Choice** Despite the difficulties of Reconstruction, the Freedmen's Bureau and plans to bring industry to the "New South" did create new jobs. What might have led people to leave their jobs for new ones?